



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Information Collection Activities; Comment Request

AGENCY: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor.

ACTION: Notice of information collection, request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a pre-clearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is soliciting comments concerning the proposed revision of the "The Consumer Expenditure Surveys: The Quarterly Interview and the Diary." A copy of the proposed information collection request can be obtained by contacting the individual listed below in the Addresses section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the Addresses section of this notice on or before [**INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER***].

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Nora Kincaid, BLS Clearance Officer, Division of Management Systems, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Room 4080, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20212. Written comments also may be transmitted by email to BLS_PRA_Public@bls.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nora Kincaid, BLS Clearance Officer, at 202-691-7628 (this is not a toll free number). (See Addresses section.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Consumer Expenditure (CE) Surveys collect data on consumer expenditures, demographic information, and related data needed by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and other public and private data users. The continuing surveys provide a constant measurement of changes in consumer expenditure patterns for economic analysis and to obtain data for future CPI revisions. The CE Surveys have been ongoing since 1979.

The data from the CE Surveys are used 1) for CPI revisions, 2) to provide a continuous flow of data on income and expenditure patterns for use in economic analysis and policy formulation, and 3) to provide a flexible consumer survey vehicle that is available for use by other Federal Government agencies. Public and private users of price statistics, including Congress and the economic policymaking agencies of the Executive branch, rely on data collected in the CPI in their day-to-day activities. Hence, data users and policymakers widely accept the need to improve the process used for revising the CPI. If the CE Surveys were not conducted on a continuing basis, current information necessary for more timely, as well as more accurate, updating of the CPI would not be available. In addition, data would not be available to respond to the continuing demand from the public and private sectors for current information on consumer spending.

In the Quarterly Interview Survey, each consumer unit (CU) in the sample is interviewed every three months over four calendar quarters. The sample for each quarter is divided into three panels, with CUs being interviewed every three months in the same panel of every quarter. The Quarterly Interview Survey is designed to collect data on the types of expenditures that respondents can be expected to recall for a period of three months or longer. In general the expenses reported in the Interview Survey are either relatively large, such as property, automobiles, or major appliances, or are expenses which occur on a fairly regular basis, such as rent, utility bills, or insurance premiums.

The Diary (or recordkeeping) Survey is completed at home by the respondent family for two consecutive one-week periods. The primary objective of the Diary Survey is to obtain expenditure data on small, frequently purchased items which normally are difficult to recall over longer periods of time.

II. Current Action

Office of Management and Budget clearance is being sought to continue the Consumer Expenditure Surveys: The Quarterly Interview (CEQ) and the Diary (CED) and to make modifications to the CEQ.

The continuing CE Surveys provide a constant measurement of changes in consumer expenditure patterns for economic analysis and obtain data for future CPI revisions.

In the CEQ, CE is seeking clearance to make the below changes.

The CE requests clearance to modify point of purchase questions for utilities, to remove collection of data related to residential business properties, to collect all expenditures including sales tax, update wording on motorized versus non-motorized campers, collect the name of the foreign country when the point-of-service outlet is outside of the US, and update bracket ranges to more accurately reflect distributions of reported data on assets and liabilities.

The CE is also seeking clearance to streamline the CEQ questionnaire by grouping similar items together, rewording items to make collection easier cognitively, and aggregating collection of items previously collected separately where feasible. As a result, several questions were eliminated from the survey and two additional sections were added and one section was modified as listed below:

- Adding a new section, Family Care and Education that combines questions previously asked across the interview on education, day care and camps, babysitting, school meals, adult day care and in-home care for invalids.
- Adding a new section on Transportation that combines questions on vehicle operating expenses with questions on transportation via taxis, limousines, app-based ride shares, bike, scooter or moped rental using sharing services, and public transport.
- Revising the Expense Patterns section to simplify the questions on usual weekly expenses for groceries, food or beverages consumed away from home, alcohol consumed at home, cigarettes and tobacco products.

No changes will be made in Diary (CED).

III. Desired Focus of Comments

The Bureau of Labor Statistics is particularly interested in comments that:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility.
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used.
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected.
- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submissions of responses.

Title of Collection: The Consumer Expenditure Surveys: The Quarterly Interview and the Diary.

OMB Number: 1220-0050.

Type of Review: Revision.

Affected Public: Individuals or Households.

Form	Total Respondents	Frequency	Total Responses	Average Time per Response	Estimated Total Burden
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CEQ - Interview	4,900	4	19,600	65	21,233
CEQ - Reinterview	2,352	1	2,352	10	392
CED - Diary Record-keeping	6,200	2	12,400	60	12,400
CED - Diary Interview	6,200	2	12,400	19	3,927
CED Diary Reinterview	1,240	1	1,240	10	207
TOTALS	11,100	//////	47,992	//////	38,159

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection request; they also will become a matter of public record.

Signed at Washington, D.C., on this 9th day of September 2022.

Eric Molina,
Acting Chief,
Division of Management Systems.

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